

The other day I was out at a local restaurant having dinner
When suddenly I noticed a young child choking.
My fire department training sprang me into action.
I ran over to the kid, performed the Heimlich Maneuver and when I did
A dime popped out of the kid's mouth.
His parents thanked me to which I replied,
"That's okay. I'm a priest.
I'm used to getting people to cough up money."

I tell that story because I think it's funny...
but I also tell that story because I think some of us think it is true.
One of the jobs of a pastor, we reason, is to raise money for the Church.

But what we are doing with this campaign—with a FFH—
Is not so much about raising money as it is
placing ourselves and our parish at the service of an awesome God.
It is about saying we, as a community, have come to believe
that God is inviting us to make of ourselves something new.

And let me say something about that for a moment...
because I don't want to drive by that without helping all of us
to understand what a powerful statement our parish is making.

It is never easy to say I'm willing to give up something—
even something as good as the Church building where I first met God—
even something as good as parish family where I grew up—
even something as good as people I have come to love
and who have come to love me--
It's never easy to say I'm willing to give that all that up
in the hope and belief that I am following the will of God.

The merging of two parishes together
and the building of a new church building to house those two communities
has only been done twice in the history of this archdiocese:
Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis; St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.
Other parishes certainly have merged together
and other Churches certainly have been closed...
but to merge together and build a new Church has happened only twice.

We are now the third...because it is not an easy thing to ask people to do...

And to do so takes a tremendous amount of faith.

And so I want to praise you for your willingness to put aside
your own wants and needs for the good of the entire Church.

It's not an easy thing to do.

And it is always a challenge to raise the money to do it.

The purpose of this campaign is not about coughing up money...

It's about seeing a vision about how we can better be Church
in 2018 and beyond.

How we can meet the needs not only of our Church for today...

But the church of tomorrow—for future generations of Catholics—

Our children and our grandchildren and our great grandchildren

You see, when I think about St. John Paul II Parish,

I have a vision of a parish where we can all worship under one roof...

I have a vision for a parish where children have the faith passed onto them

In facilities that meet the needs of a 21st century Church.

This new worship space, this new church building will help us to do that.

The other day I was standing in Church between the 7:45 a.m. Mass
and the 9:30 a.m. Mass.

I had just anointed someone who was having surgery that week.

The family and some of our parishioners were standing around

talking with each other...supporting each other and being Church together.

And at the same time the 9:30 crowd was arriving

and trying to start the rosary before Mass.

Two good things---support and ministry to the sick and prayer

competing rather than complementing one another.

This new Church will allow both of those things to happen at the same time.

In short, I believe with all my heart that this new church building

Will allow us the Church—the people of God—to better worship God

As we grow as a faith family.

I am pleased to announce that as of right now,

as we begin this commitment weekend

we have as a parish raised \$5,904,620

That is 98% of our 6 million dollar goal and 91% of our \$6.5 million

challenge goal.

48% of our parish has made a decision.

Today we are asking the rest of you to join us.

I want to say a little bit about what a faith based pledge is...

A faith based pledge says this:

Based on the information I have right now, today...

I feel that I can make the following commitment...

Please know that if your situation changes in any way
and you need to adjust your pledge...we will and do understand that.

Finally, I want to say a word to those who have declined to participate
right now...and ask you to reconsider...

I know that people have many reasons to not give,

But I'm going to ask that we come together at this historic time—

Perhaps putting aside our own wants for the obvious will
of most of our parish.

And once again, if you still have questions and concerns

I'd welcome the opportunity to talk with any of you about any part of this.

And if your decline is an emotional thing—

it is just too difficult for you to support this project,

I just want you to pray on what is God's will—

Because I truly believe that we would not be where we are today

If this were not God's will.

And so I invite you to reflect on that and consider joining us in our efforts today.

I will now ask the ushers and volunteers to pass a card out to everyone.

Even if you have already given, I would like everyone to take a card so that
we may read the prayer on it together.

[Pause briefly to allow time for everyone to be handed a card.]

**Say the prayer together once everyone has one. (Saying the prayer
ensures everyone got a card)**

**Step-by-step instructions on filling out the pledge card (Fill a card out
yourself)**

Please turn the card over and follow along as we fill the card out together.

Even if you have already given, I will ask that you turn a card in to us in a

few minutes. Again, everyone should turn in a card as an option is applicable to everyone.

Step 1 – Fill out your name and contact information. Be sure to include a current phone number and an email if possible. This will help us have the most up to date records as possible. *[give everyone time and fill it out yourself]*

Step 2 – Next, in the blue and white box, please check the box that corresponds with your decision:

- If you are making a pledge for the first time today, check the box next to **Yes!**
- If you have already made your pledge, check the box next to **Amen**. Thank you again! Our average pledge has been more than **\$11,000** or just over **\$183** a month.
- If you would like to increase your pledge please select “**Blessed!**” There is comments section on the backside for you to better explain your pledge increase. Thank you!
- If you have questions or need more time to determine the right gift for your household, check the box next to **Thinking**. Someone from our team will follow up with you in the next few days.
- If you are unable to give at this time, but will continue to pray for the success of the campaign, check **Praying**.
- Again, everyone should turn in a card so we at least know where we stand.

Step 3 – On the right side, you will see a purple table of pledge options. We are asking families to consider pledges over 5 years because we do not expect to raise \$6 million dollars all at once. So, if you are able to, please consider making a pledge of **\$100** per month, for a total gift of **\$6,000**. Please know that any amount would be valued and that *your participation*, in any way, is *most important to us*. Once you have decided an amount, please select the appropriate box.

Please know that pledges can be changed or canceled at any time. They are not contracts so I ask that you have faith that the Lord will provide. These causes are God's work and if we put ourselves out there, he will care for us and our needs. So please take a leap of faith with a five-year pledge. Also, know that you don't have to begin the pledge right away, simply write in a begin date.

Payments:

- Next, how do you intend to pay? We have many ways to accept payments:
- Explain Faith Direct and online giving
- Share an example of someone choosing to give via IRA or Stock
- When we begin receiving payments, we will be sending out a reminder email. Checks should be made out to "St. John Paul II Catholic Church" with "A Future Full of Hope Campaign" in the memo line. No payment is expected today.
- Next, select a payment schedule and begin date. You may pay monthly, quarterly, or annually. Please mark the appropriate box and you will receive reminders from the parish office. We recommend a March start date but you can indicate any date you need in 2018.
- Lastly, on the back there is a comments section. We want to allow you space to explain your pledge. The more detail we have on record the better! If you have chosen to increase your pledge at this time please provide more information on this here.

I will now give you some time to fill the card out. When you have completed your card, please bring it to me here at the altar. We will be praying over this offering as a sign of unity and thanksgiving.

[ask for music to be played while people are filling out cards]

Thank you for your generosity and may God bless you.